

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently amended) A ball mounting apparatus for mounting a plurality of balls sucked up to a head on a workpiece, said ball mounting apparatus comprising:

a positioning mechanism for positioning said workpiece;

a ball supply device for supplying said balls;

said head for sucking up said balls;

an energized force generating device for energizing said head in an upward direction;

a clamping device operable to clamp said head in a condition in which said energized force generating device stores an energized force, said clamping device comprising a clamping surface mounted to said head, and a rigid lower positioning stop configured for engagement with the head's clamping surface, wherein moving the head's clamping surface into engagement with the lower positioning stop clamps the head in a clamped position in which the force generating device stores an energized force; and

a moving mechanism for moving said head, wherein the clamping device is configured to clamp the head against the lower positioning stop with a sufficiently strong force to prevent vibration of the head during movement of the head.

2. (Previously presented) The ball mounting apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said energized force generating device is a spring member, and said spring member provides said energized force which is able to lift said head above the lower positioning stop constituting a part of said clamping device.

3. (Previously presented) The ball mounting apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said clamping device further comprises a cylinder configured to apply a vertical positioning force to said head.

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4. (Original) The ball mounting apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said workpiece is fixed on a holding table by bellows-shaped suction pads.

5-13. (Canceled)